

Anti-Strike Group and YorkNotHostage.com

A coalition of undergraduate, professional and graduate students at York University

Universities, Bargaining Units and Students Affected by the CUPE Ontario Strategy for Coordinated Bargaining in 2010

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The Anti-Strike Group and YorkNotHostage.com have received many inquiries from students regarding CUPE Ontario's strategy for coordinated bargaining in 2010. The strategy of CUPE Ontario university sector is to negotiate common contract expiry dates for several bargaining units in universities all over Ontario, so that these bargaining units can be in a strike position at the same time. This strategy is described in greater detail in a document produced by the CUPE Ontario University Worker's Co-Ordinating Committee entitled *Coordinating Our Future*.

With several university sector CUPE Ontario locals in a strike position at the same time across Ontario, CUPE Ontario will have the ability to demand to negotiate directly with the Government of Ontario. At present, each university sector CUPE local must negotiate a collective agreement with its local employer. The university sector of CUPE Ontario wants to negotiate directly with the Government of Ontario for several reasons, including: to increase its bargaining power and political clout; to gain the ability to go directly to the province for funding when individual universities are unable to pay for wage and benefits demands; and to obtain common benefits packages and improved pensions for all locals across Ontario.

Coordinated bargaining is a strategy that seeks to synchronize the contract expiry dates of several collective agreements, so that several union locals will be in a strike position at the same time. A coordinated bargaining strategy will only work if there is a risk of a province-wide university strike. However, this does not mean that a province-wide strike will actually occur. One, some, none or all of the bargaining units participating in coordinate bargaining might ultimately strike in 2010.

The likelihood of a province-wide strike appears to depend on CUPE's success in bringing the Government of Ontario to the bargaining table. To date, Ontario's Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities has stated that the Government of Ontario does not wish to bargain directly with CUPE Ontario. The minister maintains that universities are autonomous employers and should each negotiate local collective agreements with their own employees. The longer the Government of Ontario resists coordinated bargaining with CUPE Ontario, the more pressure CUPE Ontario will need to apply. If the Government of Ontario continues to resist coordinated bargaining with CUPE Ontario even after several bargaining units are in a strike position in 2010, the only mechanism

that CUPE Ontario will have left to attract the Government of Ontario to the bargaining table will be a multi-university strike.

One of the most common questions from students is: How many universities and students will be affected by coordinated bargaining in 2010? In an effort to answer this question, our group has compiled lists of universities and CUPE bargaining units, and the number of students affected, set out in Table 1 and Table 2, below.

Sources of Information:

These data were obtained from the web sites of CUPE Ontario and CUPE locals, university web sites, and in some cases from universities through e-mail correspondence.

Summary of Data:

We have identified nine university sector CUPE bargaining units with collective agreements expiring in 2010 in the following universities:

- Carleton University
- University of Guelph
- McMaster University
- University of Ottawa
- Queen's University
- Ryerson University
- Trent University
- University of Western Ontario
- University of Windsor

The combined enrollment of these universities is approximately 201,000 students.

We have identified a further five university sector CUPE Ontario bargaining units with collective agreements expiring before 2010, and that may or may not be in a strike position in 2010 depending on the contract lengths negotiated by the locals. These bargaining units are in the following universities:

- Carleton University
- University of Guelph
- Lakehead University
- University of Toronto
- York University

Two of these universities are also contained in the first list, because they have different CUPE Ontario bargaining units with collective agreements expiring at different times. We have not counted the enrollment numbers of these universities twice.

The combined enrollment of all universities in both lists is over 330,000 students.

Table 1. CUPE Ontario University Sector Collective Agreements Expiring in 2010

University	CUPE Bargaining Unit		Students Affected
	Local	Description	
Carleton University	2424	Clerical, library, administrative and technical staff	24,263 ¹
University of Guelph	1334	Custodial, grounds, and maintenance	19,188 ²
	1356-01/02	Parking and security	
McMaster University	3906	Sessional instructors and teaching assistants	21,852 ³
University of Ottawa	2626	Teaching and research assistants, markers, tutors, lab monitors, demonstrators, proctors and self-funded research bursary	35,548 ⁴
Queen's University	1302	Workers in a technical capacity in any teaching or research laboratory or associated shop area	20,629 ⁵
Ryerson University	3904	Sessional instructors and teaching assistants	25,000 ⁶
Trent University	3908	Contract faculty and student academic workers	8,446 ⁷
University of Western Ontario	1393	Trades, grounds and caretakers	30,191 ⁸
University of Windsor	1393	Skilled trades	16,000 ⁹
	1001	Groundskeepers, maintenance, custodial, housekeeping, and food services	
	4580	Teaching assistants	
TOTAL:			201,117

¹ Enrollment in September 1, 2007. Source: www.carleton.ca.

² Enrollment in Fall, 2007. Source: www.uoguelph.ca.

³ Enrollment in 2007-08. Does not include part-time students. Source: www.mcmaster.ca.

⁴ Enrollment in 2007-08. Source: www.uottawa.ca.

⁵ Enrollment in 2007-08. Source: www.queensu.ca.

⁶ Estimated enrollment in Fall, 2008. Source: www.ryerson.ca.

⁷ Combined enrollment in Peterborough and Oshawa campuses. Source: www.trentu.ca.

⁸ Enrollment in 2006-07 including affiliated colleges. Source: www.uwo.ca.

⁹ Estimated enrollment. Does not include part-time students. Source: www.uwindsor.ca.

Table 2. CUPE Ontario University Sector Collective Agreements Expiring in 2008

University	CUPE Bargaining Unit		Students Affected
	Local	Description	
Carleton University	4600	Contract instructors and teaching assistants	Incl. [†]
University of Guelph	3913	Sessional teachers and teaching assistants	Incl. [†]
Lakehead University	3905	Teaching assistants	7,644 ¹⁰
University of Toronto	3902	Teaching assistants	71,202 ¹¹
York University	3903	Teaching assistants, graduate assistants and contract faculty	50,686 ¹²
TOTAL:			129,532

Update: CUPE Local 3913 at University of Guelph reached a tentative collective agreement with a contract term of one year, expiring in 2009. This bargaining unit can be in a strike position in 2010 for coordinated bargaining either by negotiating a second one-year contract, or by working without a contract for one year.

[†] Student population is included in Table 1, and therefore already counted in "Students Affected".

¹⁰ Total enrollment. Source: www.lakeheadu.ca.

¹¹ Enrollment on November 1, 2007. Source: www.utoronto.ca.

¹² Total enrollment. Source: www.yorku.ca.